Ὁ Ἱερεὺς Καταδιωκτυμβος.

OR

A NARRATIVE OF

JOHN HENSON Master of Arts, and sometimes Minister of Gods Word at *Terrington* in the County of *NORFOLK*,

Concerning his cruel persecution by *THOMAS GUNNEL*:

AND

His illegal Ejectment by the Commissioners for ejecting of Ignorant, Scandalous, and Insufficient Ministers and School-Masters, sitting at the Grand Jury Chamber in *Norwich*, in the year, 1654.

Ego cum nihil facio dignum quod contumeliâ afficiar; nihil curo mendacia. Titus.

LONDON,
Printed by *Thomas Creake*, 1659.

OR

A NARRATIVE

OF

JOHN HENSON Master of Arts, and formerly Minister of Gods Word at Terrington in the County of NORFOLK,

Concerning his cruel persecution by THOMAS SCONEL:

AND

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Ego cum nihil facio dignum quod contumelia afficiar; nihil curo minacia. Tirus.

LONDON,
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TO THE

Honourable my truly Noble Friends,

Col. *VALENT. WALTON*,

Sir *HORATIO TOUNSEND*,

Knight and Barronet,

Sir *RALPH HARE*,

Knight and Barronet.

JOHN HENSON *wisheth Eternall Happiness.*

I Fly into the Arms, and unto the Sanctuary of your most charitable Protection, as sometimes the poor Sparrow which was pursued and persecuted by a Bird of prey, did into the bosome of one of the Senators of the *Areopagites*. O I beseech you, let that sacred bond and ligature of Religion, which hath spiritually united us into one God and Saviour, prevail with you for to take my part, and to own a poor Cast-away in those things which are lawful and honest. I know that it either hath, or may be suggested unto You, that I am a Scandalous Fellow, or a Disturber of the Peace of the Commonwealth; but I beseech You hold up an indifferency of mind, and let not a bare report of my most malicious and deadly Foes prevail over You: if it were enough to accuse, who should be innocent? O I beseech You, suffer me not to be overborn by power, or crushed by

night, or undermined by ſlander and falſe tales. I queſtion not *Right Honourable*, if it will not make for Your Honour, yet for your Comfort it will. O what a comfortable thing it is to eaſe the oppreſſed? and to help the poor, and the injuriouſly afflicted unto their rights? This is a token of Gods love, a pledge and earneſt of that future everlaſting bleſſedneſs, unto which he intends to exalt You. What Honour, I beſeech You, is it unto our moſt famous Nation, to ſee ſuch an one as I am to go up and down pining, and repining, poor and miſerable, ejected and rejected, mourning and complaining, and all for want of Juſtice? *Right Honourable*, give the poor, deſpiſed, ejected loſer leave to ſpeak, without being more miſerable: It is a ſhame that ſuch a thing ſhould be committed in *Iſrael*. The Law it is the foundation, it is the very prop and pillar of the Commonwealth. A Freedom and Liberty of participation in our claims to Law and Juſtice, it is our comfort, Your peace, and the procurer of Divine and Heavenly bleſſings both upon You and Us. How can we expect that the Lord will own us, and proſper us, if we do not keep up Juſtice and Judgement impartially. I know that in the beſt tuned inſtrument, at ſometimes one ſtring or other will be out of tune, but preſently it is rectified according unto the skil of the Muſician. And I am ſatisfied, that in a Commonwealth never ſo well ordered and governed, there will be ſome diſorder, grounded upon ſome miſtake, or falſe evidence; but it is not to be tolerated, but amended. God who is a God of juſtice, and without the leaſt ſhadow of iniquity, will not allow any injuſtice, or opreſſion in a Chriſtian Nation; but he will have all things acted and carried on juſtly, legally, and uprightly. Whether I have ſuſtained any wrong (I ſhall not be a Judge in my own Cauſe) I leave it to you, and all equal people to conſider. Oh what a ſad condition are we the poor Miniſters of Gods Word and Doctrine in! What an eaſie thing it is for us all to be ejected, if ſo be falſe Witneſſes receive credit? Upon what tickliſh pin doth our Lives and Fortunes hang? which depend upon nothing but the uncertain foundation of mans opinion; which is ſuddenly changed. What a gap is opened for the Laity to make a prey of, and to ſwallow

low up the poor Clergy, who have all advantages, both to bring our Conſciences and Purſes under their Girdles. Unto what diſcredit, ruine and defamation doth the poor Servants of the Lord of Hoſts lie open, who are blaſted with the leaſt breath of mans diſpleaſure. I beſeech You imploy thoſe Talents which the Lord hath given You for the protection of the Godly; and uſe ſuch means, that if the Wicked may not be ſuffered to enjoy any thing with the Godly, yet the Wheat may not be thrown out with the Tares out of the Barn of the Lord. The Great Lord of his Mercy preſerve you in the Liberty and Freedom of Your Conſciences, and give unto you Happineſs here on Earth, and when he ſhall command Your Spirits to be taken from You, adorn Your Heads with Crowns, Your Hands with Palms, and your Souls with Glory, according unto the Deſires and Wiſhes of *Right Honourable*

Your poor afflicted deſpiſed Servant

in the Work of the Lord

JOHN HENSON.

THE

THE EPISTLE To the READER.

Christian and religious Reader:

I Thought that I should never have appeared upon the publick Stage of the World, especially to act in such a Tragedy. As I was born of private Parents, and educated in a private Cloister in the University, so I little thought that ever I should have plaid the fool in Print, especially after this manner; and were it not, but that I expected deliverance from this great affliction that is upon me, I would have lived and been buried in silence, and not been known. I beseech thee accept of this, and it shall be as the first fruits, and thou shalt afterwards receive more from me for thy instruction and consolation. I here present unto thy view no rare Invention of some new matter, or way, no deep or profound Theological Disputation, wherein it's difficult to know which party gets the better, but a Narration of a great Difference and Law-suit of a Minister in the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour. It is strange that he that ought to be the publisher of the glad tidings of peace, from the Prince of Peace, should go to Law, and when he hath done, write a Narration of it, as if he had done well. But good

Reader,

Reader, *even for the Lords ſake believe me. I unwillingly came unto it, I did not delight in it, and I was unavoidably wrapt in it by a man of contention, who would admit of no peace nor reconciliation with me. I never was acquainted with him, nor ever ſpake ten words to him in all my life (except for peace) who had not been a month in the Pariſh before he contended with me; and then I muſt be turned out of my Living.*

What could God or the World expect more from a poor Miniſter, than for him to ſubmit and humble himſelf to a ſtranger, to whom he had done no wrong, nor given any juſt cauſe of offence. Had I committed any ſuch matters, as he wanted not impudency to proclaim, and falſeneſs to ſet up falſe Witneſſes to ſwear; it would not much have grieved me to have ſtooped: I know that the world would look upon it as an act of guiltineſs, privately to ſmother, and take up that, which was publickly divulged, to be ſuch an offence and treſpaſs.

But yet my poverty and peaceable nature did move me to ſeek for peace, rather than to be contentious; knowing that the one would procure me as much love, as the other would do hatred: but nothing will work any good upon a bad nature. Good Reader, I will not tire thy patience in the entry, I do deſire thy ſerious deliberation and judgement, which if thou paſſeſt upon every thing, I queſtion not, but that thou wilt juſtifie me a peaceable man, and meerly paſſive in the contention. For, who I pray ſued firſt, did not my Adverſary? when he had ſued me, did not I ſeek him? and that I ſued him for calling me Drunken Prieſt, *not out of a ſpirit of malice or contention, but of wiſdom, hoping thereby to work him to an agreement: am I therefore to be accounted a contentious man? I brought down the Trial to the Aſſizes to be holden the firſt of* Auguſt 1654. *(which I was forced to do) but I made a Demurr, and did not try it there; then was it, think you, becauſe I was afraid and durſt not? It was not of the innocency and clearneſs of my caſe, nor altogether of his falſe & perjured Witneſſes, as I have proved they were, and ſtill am able to make good; but that room might be made, and occaſion given of a timely agreement and reconciliation. But I will not ante-tell my Narration; if I were not hurt I would not cry nor complain. Judge I pray you, and*

pity,

pity, and endeavour to relieve the oppressed, to help the wronged. The Lord raise me up friends, who am helpless, and poor, and afflicted; that that small time I have to be here in my banishment, may be a little sweetned, that I may with comfort and peace leave this world, to be translated to my native country, my fathers house, everlasting joy in the Kingdom of God, which the Lord give both unto me and thee, and all his elect, according unto the most fervent desire and prayers

Of one of the afflicted members

of the Body of Jesus,

JOHN HENSON

BRITISH MUSEUM

A Narrative of JOHN HENSON Mr. *of Arts and Vicar of* Terrington *in* Norfolk *concerning his illegall ejectment.*

GOd is pleaſed, by the mouth of his holy Prophets, to reſemble his Church, while ſhe is upon the troubleſome ſea of this world, unto a ſhip; and our for ever to be adored Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt, while he was in the world, going up and down for to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt, entred into a ſhip with his Diſciples; which was a figure or repreſentation of his Church, according unto the judgement of thoſe who want not credit, except it be with them who deſpiſe both Comment and Text, and fling both by, as ſavouring too too much of fleſh and bloud: and indeed well ſhe may; for in her onely, as in the Ark of the Lord, are men ſafe and ſecure from danger and deſtruction; in her onely we have comfort for the preſent, and aſſured hope of arriving at that bleſſed port, that happy haven of eternal repoſe and ſweetneſs, the Kingdom of God. Isa. 54. 11. *Extra Eccleſiam nulla ſalus*

And alſo in reſpect of thoſe many and infinite dangers, & diſtreſſes unto which ſhe is ſubject, while ſhe is ſailing upon the turbulent billows of this miſerable world; What ſtorms and tempeſts? what tumultuous waves and ſeas of afflictions and troubles have been always raiſed and blown up againſt the Church of God? *ventorum conſpiratio, dæmonum nebulæ, Judeorum turbines, Regum ſpumantes undæ*, have ſo continually beat upon her, as if they had agreed, and did conſpire againſt her, to bring her into diſtreſs and afflict her: yea, ſuch ſeas, ſuch perilous, and dangerous times hath ſhe gone through, that ſhe hath not been able for to keep the ſea, but hath been forced to make for ſome creek, ſome fleet, or harbour for ſafety and protection. If that you look for the Church of God, you ſhall find her amongſt caves and dens,

Cyprian.

thereby to avoid the inquiſition of perſecutors then ſhining in high places: compelled ſhe is to lie hid *in foraminibus, in ſalebris Petræ*, in dens and caves of the earth, as being there moſt ſafe in the tempeſt of perſecution.

And if we now look for her, where ſhall we find her? but lurking amongſt the rubbiſh of her ruins, and to bear the Croſs, whileſt her treacherous children laugh at her diſcovered nakedneſs: The time hath been that ſhe was as a light upon an hill, --*fuit Ilium & ingens gloria Teucrorum:* —— admired and looked upon by all, for the wonderful purity and brightneſs of her Doctrine and Ceremonies. *Ait ſeges eſt ubi Troja fuit.* --- O! how fitly may we lament the ruins of our *Jeruſalem* in the words of the Prophet; *How is the gold become dim? how is the moſt fine gold changed? the ſtones of the ſanctuary are poured forth in the top of every ſtreet. The precious ſons of Zion, moſt comparable to fine gold, how are they eſteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter?* How are the Houſes of God the ſanctuaries of the Lord of Hoſts? from whence he is pleaſed for to manifeſt & to make known the Oracles of his gracious will and pleaſure, and to receive the ſweet inceniſe of our prayers and ſervices, how are they contemned; as nothing but bare lime and ſtone, lurking holes for falſe and lazy prophets; and not accounted of, as thoſe places which are ſet apart for no other buſineſs, but the celebration of the glory of the infinite and boundleſs Majeſty of Heaven and Earth; whoſe being notwithſtanding is incomprehenſible, not to be meaſured within the limits of finite places, yet is eſpecially pleaſed for to accommodate himſelf, & to draw near unto all thoſe who aſſemble and meet together with unfaigned deſire of enquiring after him. How are the Embaſſadors of Jeſus Chriſt & Miniſters of God, to whom he is pleaſed to give, as it were, a participation of his own eſſence & being; and to digniſie with the repreſentation of his own glorious preſence how are they brought into contempt and ſlander, and ejected as filthy, and abominable, altogether unfitting for that moſt holy calling.

Lam. 4. 1, 2.

Ver. 2.

Dei terrenum habitaculum veſtes palatium & domus area, & aula regia. Bern. per Cant.

It is no ſmall judgement which the Lord denounces by his Prophet, *Ecce Dominus amoturus Prophetam* to ſee thoſe, who are the true Miniſters of Chriſt, and faithful ſtewards

3. 2.

of

of his heavenly oracles displaced, and to be substituted in their rooms, *Jeroboam's* Priests, of whom it is said, who pleased might ordain himself; to see the Commission taken out of the hands of lawful Embassadors, and given to erratical and wandring Messengers; such as run when none hath sent them; to see stars fixed in the right hand of Christ, for to be eclipsed of their glory & brightness; and planets of an uncertain motion, to have that honour confer'd upon them, as to be guides unto those who are ignorant of the way to Heaven; who onely by tangling and jangling in matters of no importance, ring away other mens bees: false fires as they are, which arise to seduce and deceive; to see the true and faithful shepherds of the flock of Jesus turned out of dores, and to have thieves which steal in by the windows received in; to see *Aaron* stript of his Priestly robes and office and *Abiram* to step into his place and function; and true Apostles sent by Jesus, to be turned back, and to have backsliders and revolters from the Catholique truth for to find welcome; Who, although they bear the name of Apostles, are found lyars. For why the woman *Jezabel* calleth her self a Prophetess? and who at last, when God shall be pleased for to open their eyes, shall be forced to cry out from the powerful conviction of a troubled conscience, I am no Prophet but an husbandman, and I have deceived.

1 Kings 13. 33

Rom. 10.

Non venit ante suum nostra querela diem.

It had been better for us if our parents (who laid out our estates to make us fitting for this Office) had saved that money, and brought us up to some other mechanical calling; for then might we have been capable of the Priesthood. *O tempora! O mores!* O strange times! wherein impudency, and ignorance, seem qualifications enough for a divine. O how were they esteemed of in former times? how were they reverenced of the mighty, feared of the wise, and beloved of the poor? But this age is the prophanest that ever was! there are risen up new *Israelites*, that despise *Aaron*; new *Corahs*, *Dathans* and *Abirams*, who controul the Lord's Prophets, saying, you take too much upon you ye sons of *Levi*, seeing all the Lord's people are holy alike: it is very much to be feared that judgement is on the wing, that it is near at hand;

Per ipsos Christum induimus, per ipsos Dei Filio conjungimur, per ipsos membra beati capitis efficimur, quomodo non solum revereudi magis quam reges aut judices, sed etiam magis honorabiles quam parentes Chrys. de dignitat. Sacerdot. lib. 2.

when as his Prophets are ſo diſreſpected; deſolation and utter deſtruction was then near unto *Jeruſalem*, when as the Prophets of the great Lord of Hoſts (who is pleaſed to offer terms of peace and agreement before he falls upon a people with deſolation) were turned back, caſt out, and deſpiſed; a people muſt needs lie open to the fury of the Lord, (who is a conſuming fire) when there is none for to ſtand in the gap to appeaſe his anger, who is a God not onely jealous of, but zealous for the maintaining and keeping up his own honour and name, and will not ſee thoſe, who by his deputation, are aſſigned to be his Meſſengers, to be thus dealt withall, by proud and diſloyal duſt and aſhes, to whom they are ſent; downright deſtruction was then near unto the *Egyptians*, when as *Moſes* took his leave of *Pharaoh*.

But be not diſmayd at theſe things, O ye Miniſters of the great God of Heaven and Earth, who is able both for to bear up your hearts with patience for the preſent, and to work out your full and compleat deliverance for the future. Although the Land be as full of trouble as the ſea is of waves, yet lift up your heads, be not diſcouraged but diſplay the Goſpel of our Lord and Maſter; let nothing quite extinguiſh or in the leaſt diminiſh the ferveney of your zeal; but preach and declare the whole and intire truth of Jeſus; let none of theſe evils, which now are upon the face of the Nation, make you afraid; but advance the ſtandard, and bear up the enſign of the Apoſtolick doctrine.

You are the men whom God hath made choice of, to be the keepers, and the faithful ſtewards of the myſteries of God; hold faſt therefore the form of ſound words; let neither perſecution, nor hope of favour, draw or prevail with you for to betray your truſt. Behold, the poor Church our moſt dear and affectionate Mother, ſtretcheth forth both her armes, and beſeecheth you not to ſuffer the bays for to wither in your hand, nor God's cauſe for to fall to the ground; but to ſtand up for the truth which is call'd in queſtion, by her undutiful and ſtubborn children; lay aſide all other buſineſs, and count this your onely work and employment.

My Brethren and Companions in tribulation, If our Goſpel

Goſpel be of man, the reſult and effect of our politick contrivance, it will come unto nothing, it will fall and moulder away, God himſelf wil have an hand in the confuſion of *Babel*. Our bleſſed Saviour hath told us what will become of that which is not of divine plantation; *Every plant which my Father hath not planted ſhall be rooted up*; But if it be the truth of God, it will prevail notwithſtanding all contradiction God's truth is mighty and ſhall overcome. *Dagon* ſhall fall down headlong before the ark of God; the darkneſs ſhall flee before the light; and the more reſolutely mans wiſedom ſhall ſtand, the more glorious ſhall God be in his victory; be falſhood never ſo freſhly colour'd, and ſtrongly fortifi'd, yet in the end the truth ſhall conquer: Bear up therefore againſt the wind and tide of ſchiſm and faction; now is the time wherein you may doe the Church ſervice, and win to your ſelves that renown which neither contempt ſhall eclipſe, nor time ſhall diminiſh. The days are come, of the which that great Apoſtle and Prophet foretold, wherein *ſound doctrine would not be received*; but that men would heap up to themſelves teachers, *having itching ears*; and that none, but ſuch as walk in the ſpirit of lyes and falſhood ſhould be eſteemed of; but think not of theſe things, but what will become of you another day; and of that great account, which muſt be given up unto the great judge of Heaven and Earth; not onely of the flock, but of thoſe truths committed unto your truſt. Finally, my Brethren be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Matth 15. 13.

2 Tim. 4. 3.

God, whoſe eyes are a thouſand times brighter then the Sun, and whoſe knowledge pierces irreſiſtibly into the depths & labyrinths of all ſecrets, knoweth, with what unwillingneſs I entred into this Office; the tumultuous waves of trouble and faction where with I did ſee the Church of God to be toſſed made me afraid to ſet ſail; being fully aſſured that perſecution did *firſt begin at the houſe of God*. I had digeſted that of the Wiſeman; *My ſon, when thou entreſt Gods ſervice, ſtand faſt in righteouſneſs and fear, and prepare thy ſoul for temptation*. I knew that there was ſuch qualifications requiſite to a Miniſter of Chriſt, unto which I feared that I had not fully wrought up my ſoul. I knew that unto that ſacred office

Eccleſ. 2. 1.

was

was required a ſober gravity, alienated from the very manners of ordinary people: a life wholy ſerious, weighty, ſolid, which my younger years could not perfectly diſſemble; but yet did always ſo behave my ſelf, as that I might not be a diſcouragement unto the zealous profeſſion of godlineſs; but that by the piercing influence of my example, I might draw and allure thoſe, that came after me, to a love of holineſs.

Non eſt tanti laudii exceſſa venuiſſe. Hier. in Ezek. lib. 2. Rogatus non rogatus oportere ſuſcipere curam animarum Vitruvius in præf. lib. 1. 1 Tim. 1. 7.

I was very unwilling to undertake this charge, being fully perſwaded, that more trouble than honor, more contempt than eaſe, did aſſuredly follow thoſe that were faithful; contrary (I am ſure) to the too raſh and bold precipitancy of many in this age, who run with greedineſs into the office of the Prieſt-hood, underſtanding neither what they ſay, nor whereof they affirm; yet adventure to be teaching. With what blind zeal and eagerneſs do they purſue that function, not ſo much *pro paſtu ovium*, out of fervent deſire of their inſtruction for their ſalvation; *ſed pro lanâ* (falſe Prophets as they are) they eat the fat, and they cloath themſelves with the wool, and they enrich themſelves with the ſpiritual promotions, when as men more religious and devout have fled from benifices, and cures of ſouls, as from a ſerpent or poiſon, and have not without trembling undertaken it. Profound and great was the knowledge and judgement of *Thomas* of *Aquin*, in ſo much that if any might have challenged that ſacred office, he might; he being one in whoſe breaſt did ſeem to lie hid the treaſures of knowledg & learning; yet by no means would be brought to accept of the Biſhoprick of *Naples*: and when as *Clement* the fourth of *Rome* did importunately follow him with intreaties for to accept of it, returned him this anſwer; *Mallem ego Chryſoſtomi commentarios in Matthæum*; accounting others more able to inſtruct him, than himſelf fitting for to teach others. Such humility is there in a gracious heart that hath intereſt in heaven.

Great was the learning, and holy was the life of *Cyprian*, ſo innocent and inoffenſive was his life and converſation amongſt men that he ſeemed to be quit of humane corruption, and common infirmities, which are molded up in the lump of men common and ordinary; he was ſo abſtemious from pleaſures (which do commonly draw off mens hearts from

from the love of God) that he fled into the wilderneſs, and places moſt ſolitary, that with more cloſe and united affections, he might call upon God; yet being elected by the common conſent and voices of all, into the office of a Biſhop, he did earneſtly beſeech them to alter their choice, accounting himſelf altogether inſufficient for the diſcharge of the office; yet theſe younger Novices think themſelves ſufficiently inſpired. It is recorded of St. *Peter* of *Alexandria*, being the lawful ſucceſſor to St. *Mark*, that he would never in all his life get into the Chair, but all his days did ſit on the Footſtool, accounting himſelf unworthy and unable for ſo high a Calling: And of *Nilamon*, that ſuch terrors did invade his heart, as he was carried to a Biſhoprick, that he ſwooned away, and gave up the ghoſt; ſo terrible was that weighty office unto him. But O how ſwiftly do theſe run after it? how greedily do they catch at it? thinking themſelves the onely perſons of divine miſſion; But I am afraid they are ſent not ſo much by the ſpirit of God, which keeps and preſerveth men within the limits of their callings, as with the ſpirit of ambition and coveteouſneſs; there being not ſo much honour as contempt, not eaſe as trouble and diſquietneſs, attending that imployment.

Inſpice & diſces ſub iſta tenui membranâ quantum mali latet. Sen. Epiſt 115.

Baronius.

Mittit eos ſuperbia, mittit eos avaritia, mittit eos ambitio, mittit hæreſis, mittit malus dæmon.

I had not ſailed far, but ſome ſtormes came down; ſo that I began to be ſea-ſick: and fain I would, if poſſible, have returned to the ſame port from whence I ſet forth; but I perceived, that ſeeing I was engaged, there was no thoughts of looking back either with ſafety or honour; and ſeeing that I was liſted, I muſt of neceſſity be courageous, and ſtand to it; and not with cowardiſe fling down my armes and run away. I was inſtructed, how that then I muſt be contented for to ſuffer for him, that had called me to the office; and that I muſt be contented to contemn contempt it ſelf, deſpiſe deſpight, that by any means I might bring in ſouls into his treaſury; and indeed (if I may ſo ſpeak without any affection to my ſelf) did ſo behave my ſelf, as that I did get a good Seat in the hearts and affections of my pariſhioners; inſomuch that ſome of them (I dare ſay) would have imparted their very ſouls unto me: But it pleaſed God whoſe actions are not for to be called in queſtion, and whoſe gentle corrections are

for

for to be endured with patience, to ſend me one out of another Pariſh, to bring about his own work, and to cauſe my grief. Gods actions concerning men are irreſiſtible, let us indeavour never ſo much, by all the craft and ſubtilty of our politick head pieces, to keep our ſelves in credit, that ſo we might ſit the more ſurely in the enjoyment of that which we poſſeſs, yet we cannot be ſecure and immune from troubles.

The occaſion of this difference.

There was a ſeat in the Pariſh Church of *Terrington* St. *Clement*, in the County of *Norfolk*, which did belong (as all men belonging unto the ſaid place could teſtifie) unto the Vicar of the ſaid Town, and was commonly called by the name of the *Vicars Wifes Seat*, unto which one *Thomas Gunnel*, lately come into the town, did claim a title. Had I been aſſured that it had been his, or belonged to any thing ſo called, I ſhould have as willingly diſowned it, as he ſhould lay any claim unto it; it being almoſt againſt my nature to ask my own where I have an indubitated due. But God hath an hand in bringing all things about, to compleat and perfect his own deſigns concerning men: and although it had been mine, yet I ſhould have been contented to have parted from it, rather then in the leaſt to contend, or give any occaſion to the world to ſay that I was contentious. It is well known that I have been no good Client to the Law or Lawyers, but have much diſcouraged thoſe that were ſo: being fully perſwaded that mans happineſs in this world conſiſted in nothing ſo much as in the enjoyment of quiet and repoſe; unto which all things naturally do tend and move; and in the enjoyment of which, they do ſecurely ſleep and reſt, as in conjunction with their long deſired and now enjoyed good.

Or what advantage would it have been to me to give occaſion to the world to ſay that I was contentious? I knew well enough that the comfort of a Miniſter did conſiſt in that eſtimation and love in the which he is rooted within the hearts of his Pariſhioners; eſpecially in theſe days, wherein it is not thought lawful nor honeſt for him to go to Law at all; but (like the Stoical benummedneſs of Quakers) to be ſtrook, and not to ſtrike again, to be defamed, and not

right

right themſelves; to be treſpaſſed upon, and not to ſue.

Were it before the Heathen, or in thoſe places where there were no Chriſtian Laws for the diſtribution of right, it might be true; but in a civil and well governed State and Commonwealth, I know no reaſon why we may not, as well as others (in caſe of wrong) appeal unto the Law, in the enjoyment of whoſe liberty, even we have as great a ſhare as any man.

I know indeed that the main comfort of a Miniſter in this world conſiſts in that love and eſteem which his pariſhioners bear unto him, which renders not only him acceptable and gracious unto them, but them alſo ſerviceable unto him, in doing for him, ſuch civil courteſies as he ſtands in need of while he is on this ſide heaven. And which makes them both, both Prieſt & people, unanimouſly conſpire & agree together to glorifie the name of the God of heaven upon the earth. Not as if I had any intentions to quarrel with him: but, like *Abraham* and *Lot*, to depart and be friends. But God help, me, and bring forth my innocency as the light, and my righteouſneſs as the noon day) my thoughts of love and intentions of compliance, proved on occaſion of my future grief, and inlets to my further trouble. We had not been long together, but the difference burſt out, and we fell at odds about the ſeat; juſt like the two Novices in France, who being abroad together in a ſtar-light night, and the one wiſhing that he had as many Oxen as there were ſtars in the heaven, and the other an Ediſhgrouth as capacious as the firmament, differed and fell out about the grazing of the beaſts. His furious nature could not reaſon out the caſe by argument and cold blood; but his preſent wrath gave ſpur to his conceived malice to blaſt my reputation; and he came up to my very throat, ſaying, *You are a drunken Prieſt*; whereupon I deſiring him to be civil, he added, *You ſtrook me.*

What an inundation of troubles and contention may follow a little difference? from this little breach did flow the future deluge of ſorrows and diſtractions. *Principiis obſta*, take up differences in their beginning, our natures are proud and too apt to contend; and if we ſuffer them to be toucht

with contention, they presently grow into inveteracy; insomuch that our hatred knoweth no limits, but overfloweth the banks of civility and justice: like as the breaking in of a full Spring tyde, it is easie to take up the breach and stop the current, if seasonably taken; but if any while let alone, the cataracts do enlarge the breach, beat down all that oppose it, and is not to be made up without a great deal of art and difficulty. Anger in the beginning is violent, *dum incipit tota est*, yet is more easily quenched in the beginning, but being let alone, it then takes such root within our hearts, as that it is not easily plucked up.

Indeed had he been a man wise or religious, I should not have much questioned my peace: if he be addicted to contention, yet he will not with his Priest, or if the baseness of his behaviour had stirred him up to actions of strife, yet like the manner of the Scholars of *Pythagoras*, he would shake hands and be friends with him before he had slept; but my Antagonist cannot sleep, but upon a troubled pillow. He did abandon all motions to friendship, and refused to give entertainment to the very thoughts of peace; as if like the Salamander, he is never well but when he is in the fire of variance and contention.

I could not but extremely admire and wonder, that he should be so audaciously wicked, as to begin his Action; for I never struck him: I call heaven and earth to witness; my witness is in heaven, and my record is in earth, that I never struck him: and it could never enter into my heart to believe, that men should be so void of grace, and cast off the fear of the Lord and his judgements, as to swear that to be true, which is absolutely a lye and an untruth, and so root their wickedness in heaven on the God of truth, who is without wickedness, and hates the persons of those that takes bribes, and turns aside unto lying. But I have found, that *nullum tam impudens mendacium ut teste careat*, that there is nothing, be it never so false and untrue, but some may be found for to justifie it.

For my part, although he had grievously wounded me in my good name and reputation, by his malicious and lying tongue, yet as it was done in anger, and in the heat of passion,

ſion, ſo I ſhould have buried it in ſilence and forgetfulneſſe.

There is nothing in the world ſo dear unto a man as his credit: inſomuch that a contemptible and a diſdainful word, although it have no ſubſiſtence but in the imagination, moves him into choler and rage; but if they be real diſgraces, on a ſudden he is tranſported into fury and diſturbance. An ingenious ſpirit doth more grieve at a ſcandalous word againſt his good name, then a wound unto his body; which the Prophetical King did compare to ſpears and arrows, and which the very ſoul of the Wiſeman feared, accounting it worſe then death. *There be three things that my ſoul feareth, and for the fourth I was ſore afraid, the ſlander of a City, the gathering together of an vnruly multitude, and a falſe accuſation: all theſe are worſe then death.* Eccleſ. 26: 5

But although my age is not great, yet my troubles have been many; and I have not been acquainted ſo much with the gilded felicities of this vain and deceitful world, which do ordinarily puff men up into pride and vain glory, but that I well knew how to bear contempt, and to take a ſcandalous word or two from him, who wanted both wiſedom and civility; and upon whoſe mouth did not in the leaſt depend my reputation and honour: I knew that the beſt conqueſt in theſe things was to deſpiſe and ſcorn them; and the moſt noble revenge was, not in the leaſt, to take notice what ſuch youngen novices, as he is, through folly and indiſcretion, did ſpeak forth: and therefore I had (not onely the patience for to heare) but the mercy to forgive his indiſcretion, in caſting dirt on the profeſſion which our Anceſtors did adore and reverence; not accounting the Prieſts of the Lord of Hoſts to be Prieſts of *Bachus* and drunken Prieſts, but holy unto the Lord, and to be had in double honour, not ſo much for their ſakes, as for his, whoſe Meſſengers and Miniſters they are, and for that work, for the diſpatch of which they are called unto the Office.

Neceſſe eſt Sacerdotem eſſe purum ut in cœlo collocatus inter ipſas cœ virtutes media ſtaret. Clemen epiſt. 1. ad Jacob.

But it ſeems that the Prieſts of the Lord are become drunken Prieſts; or elſe our age is fallen into that open prophanneſs, as by it they are ſo accounted: How holy, and how innocent ought thoſe perſons for to be, who are exalted unto the dignity, as to treat the cauſe of man with God? and

upon whoſe acceptance, as it were, depends the whole ſucceſs of the buſineſs; how pure, and unreprovable ought he to be, who is ordained to offer up the ſacrifices of the people, and to receive God's gracious anſwers?

Heb. 5. *For every High Prieſt is taken from among men, and is ordained for men, in things pertaining unto God, that he might offer both gifts and ſacrifices for ſin.* The Candleſticks of the Sanctuary were commanded to be made of pure gold. *Sacerdos debet eſſe Chriſti alumnus, à peccati ſegregatus, rector, nonraptor; ſpeculator, non ſpiculator, diſpenſator, non diſſipator; pius in judicio, juſtus in conſilio, devotus in choro, ſtabilis in Eccleſiâ, ſobrius in mensâ, prudens in letitiâ, purus in conſcientiâ, aſſiduus in oratione, patiens in adverſitate, verax in prædicatione;* How pure ought that mouth to be, which is imploied in the manifeſtation of the glory of the moſt holy God? how pure ought thoſe hands to be from pollution, which are to be lift up unto the moſt holy place, in the behalf of the people, that God would bleſs them? How chaſt that heart ought to be, which is ſo frequently elevated to a conjunction with the moſt pure and undefiled eſſence? yet you ought not, for every ſlip, for every failing, and infirmity, to be ſo raſh and heady, as to ſtep into God's throne and tribunal, to cenſure and paſs your judicial ſentence upon them, to diſrobe and ſilence them, to turn them out of houſe and harbour, to cut them off from *Jeruſalem*, and make them perpetually miſerable, and to continue and end their lives in ſorrows and diſtractions. What, know you not that you are carnal, envious, and malicious againſt them; that you are apt for to be deceived, and that counterfeit coin is many times taken by you for currant money; that corruption and rottenneſs will diſſemble to ſhine like pure vital light or chriſtal; that you have been divers times miſtaken by a cloud for *Juno*, a miſt of hypocriſie for the ſubſtance of true and perfect righteouſneſs; and that in that man, who hath wrought up his ſoul unto the higheſt perfection of ſanctification that he is capable of whileſt he is on this ſide glory and eternity, there is and ſtill doth remain ſome dregs of corruption and infirmity; to the moſt bright and eminent planet and conſtellation there ſometimes happens obſcurations and eclipſes; the greateſt

Iſidor. in Poluſiat. l. 3. epiſt. 2.

aici in accuſatione Miniſterum audiendi non ſunt ternales ſemper perſequi ſolent ſpirituales.

greateſt lights in the Church have had their blemiſhes, and although God hath not admitted all both Prieſt and Laity to the promulgation of the Goſpel, yet both of them he hath made ſubject unto ſin; ſo that it appears, that though the Prieſt be compaſſed with infirmity, and therefore ought not onely for the peorle but for himſelf to offer up for ſin, yet Heb. 3. 5. he is not thereby made unable or uncapable of preaching the Goſpel; but rather is the better informed and ſtrengthned, to meaſure inſtruction unto thoſe that are ignorant. Ver. 2. Gold, although it be not altogether refined, yet it is not to be refuſed: wheat, although not throughly clenſed, yet may be placed in the garner; and I know no reaſon why that infirmity, which ſticks and cleaves ſo faſt unto their nature that it cannot be removed, ſhould not be ſuffered to remain in them. God forbid that I ſhould commend, or in the leaſt allow of a ſpot or blemiſh in that moſt pure and holy office. My witneſs is in Heaven. I have no ſuch thoughts; but rather to commend charity, which covereth a multitude of faults: that men may not deride at, and trample upon, the nakedneſs of their parents, but hide and cover them with the mantle of love and ſilence; knowing that, as God was able to make him ſtand, ſo he is able to raiſe him up again, and make him an impregnable bulwark againſt temptation. God can make, when he pleaſeth, of a *Saul* a *Paul*, of a Publican an Evangeliſt, of a Fiſher a Preacher, of a Thief a Confeſſor, of a Fornicator a chaſt Father, of an Heretique an Apoſtolique Doctor, of a wicked man a ſound member and ſure pillar of the Church of God, of a wanton *Auſtin* a deep Divine and worthy Preacher. For the commiſſion of one fault, who would have an hand in bringing deſtruction upon a young man, a penitent perſon, that hath wife and children, who may afterwards prove a moſt excellent Inſtrument for the declaring of God's glory?

Non à pravæ vitæ hominibus lacerandi ſervi Dei, ſed ab omnibus fidelibus portandi. Aug. lib. de Civit. Dei, cap. 14.

O I wiſh that there was more mercy, more heedful reſpect and reverence ſhown unto thoſe who are ſo near unto Almighty God! Conſider that thoſe affronts and injuries, which are offred unto them, reſt not there, but reach unto the Perſon of the great and incomprehrnſible majeſty of Heaven and Earth; who although he liveth in light inacceſſible,

unto

unto which no man can approach, yet is pleaſed to make over and aſſign his honour unto them that ſerve him at his Altar; but the beſt way to diſpatch them, is to defame them; bring them but into contempt and deriſion, and they will fall down without any great ſtir. In the Primitive perſecution, ſuch was their hatred unto the profeſſors of the Doctrine of the Goſpel, that they did deviſe means to afflict them; and therefore that they might manifeſt their rage and fury againſt them, and affright and diſcourage men from imbracing it, they covered the profeſſors of it with the skins of wild beaſts, and ſo expoſed them to be baited and devoured by dogs: Our age hath found the like invention; we are defamed, we are covered with the filthy and beaſtly vices of Drunkenneſs and Adultery, that the curriſh diſpoſitions of the men of *Belial* might be incouraged and encreaſed, and their fury provoked to devour us up.

Euſebius.

It hath been received, and it is ſtill verified in the practice of many, that there is no conſcience to be uſed in the ruine of an enemy. What; a foe to their honour? injurious to their perſons? and an enemy to their riſing greatneſs? Such an one was I accounted by my adverſary, & therefore I was likely to find nothing but cruelty. Now the only way to ruin a man is to begin with his Name; kill but that, and all's preſently ſtruck dead; faſten but a ſlander or calumny upon him, and you may work any miſchief upon him, and never be blamed for it. That was a ſure plot which was contrived againſt *Jeremy* likely to take effect; *Jer.* 18. 18. *Come and let us deviſe deviſes againſt* Jeremy, *and let us ſmite him with the tongue*; Which my adverſary made uſe of; and therefore in what place ſoever he came, he did declare, that I was drunk; and that I did ſtrike him three ſtrokes upon the breſt; and that he would turn me out of my Benefice.

Good God, what a little diſtance is there betwixt the hatred had, and the ejectment of a Miniſter! Let him give any occaſion of diſpleaſure and diſlike, yea though none be given, but taken and forged, the next thing thats thought on is turning out; and now all his might and force is bent and muſter'd up for Ejectment. A ſtrong accuſation driven home with vehemency of affirmation, will faſten upon a man of the moſt

moſt innocent and harmleſs converſation, *urgeas fortiter aliquid adhærebit*, he who ſaid it, knew well enough what he ſaid: be a man never ſo inoffencive and harmleſſe, ſome ſcandal, vehemently aſſerted and maintained, will cleave, and ſome grudgings of ſuſpition that he is guilty of it will ariſe and ſprout in the heads of thoſe who formerly had better thoughts of him; and therefore, that he might eaſier effect me, he did ſo beſpatter me, that if poſſible he might render me odious unto my Pariſhioners, and ſo the ſooner accompliſh his deſires. He was very forward to doe the deed, onely as yet he wanted opportunity to ſerve his turn; but in the interim he ſends for a Writ, intending for to ſue upon an Action of Battery.

What hath Miniſters to doe *in Foro*, in Markets, Fairs and confluxes of people, amongſt merchandiſe, bargains, and ſuits of Law? they may injoy more ſolace in privacy, then in any thing which natures great exchange can afford unto them. Let us follow and purſue the tracks and paths of Worldlings, yet at laſt, we ſhall find that to be moſt true, *Nuſquam inveni requiem niſi in libro & clauſtro*: and he that is ſo devoted to injoy the ſweeteſt ſerenity, and beſt repoſe of contentment, my adverſaries proſecution, wherein he thought to work me trouble, miniſtred an occaſion not onely of injoying my ſelf, but of avoiding thoſe diſtractions which accompanies all thoſe who are drowned with Law and diſſention; which made me retire and keep in that I might avoid the Arreſt.

I looked upon this action as an effectual means of allaying of that paſſion which he was in at preſent, (who knows not that time and protraction wears out anger, which like a ſtorm, or torrent, ariſes and falls in a moment; or like a ſudden fire, which ariſes, flames and extinſtuiſhes of it ſelf,) thinking that his reaſon would at length ſway his paſſion; and alſo that by the perſuaſion of all thoſe which did bear me any affection, with whom I was confident that he could not but meet in his daily converſation, would ſo appeaſe his conceived malice, that no contention ſhould be betwixt us, but a fair and friendly agreement; in compariſon of which, a glorious conqueſt ſhould not have been deſired: but no act

Ira eſt ſubita animi tempeſtas. Aug.

of

of goodneſs worketh upon a bad nature. We ſoon fall into malice, if we ſuffer the Sun to go down upon our wrath, and give place to anger; *ira inveteraſcens fit odium, quaſi juſta doloris admiſta dulcedo diutius eam in vaſe detenet donec totum aceſcat vaſq; corrumpit.*

Aug. ad Dioſc.

I was as backward to be drawn into contention, as a Bear is to come unto the Stake. I well knew him to be a mighty man of Suit and Law from his youth up; being born and educated in that houſe, from which contention did never depart; and therefore I did chuſe rather to ſeek peace, then to enter with him the liſt of contention; knowing that the weakeſt would go by the walls, and that great flies would break through by forcible entry, where the leſs would be intangled; and eſpecially in theſe times, wherein the tide and currant of diſreſpect and contempt went ſtrongly againſt the Clergy; And therefore I went unto his houſe (God knoweth) with an ill will, yet with a good confidence of obtaining my requeſts; knowing that great ſpirits are ſooner made ours by ſtooping to, then contending with, where we had this following conference.

Boni ſemper & Chriſtiani hominis eſt rem ipſam omnibus amicitiæ & pacis legibus tentare (quam in judicio ubi frequenter amariſſimus animæ rancor innaſcitur) ſuum jus pertinaciter experire.

Miniſter. Sir, *I am the moſt unfittingeſt man in the Pariſh that you could make choice of for ſuit; never meddle with one that is not your match; you will not gain any repute by the conqueſt, but rather contract an* odium *unto your ſelf in the proſecution; wherefore I beſeech you for to let fall your ſuit, and be friends with me.*

T. G. I take your unkiudneſs very ill, that you ſhould ſtrike me three ſtrokes upon the breſt.

Min. *Whether I ſtrook you, or whether I did not, is not the matter for which I come; it is not my deſire for to plead to your Declaration: but I intreat for friendſhip and agreement with you.*

T. G. Will you pleaſe for to walk into the houſe? I wiſh my wife was at home to make you welcome: but there is none but my ſelf left at home, ſo that I am ſorry I cannot bid you drink.

Min. *That you ſo lovingly imbrace my friendſhip, I take as kindly as any thing in the world you could have done for me: it being my glory for to live in the love and reſpects of my Pariſhioners. I thought for to have ſought unto you by mediation of friends; but*

but I conceived it better for to come my ſelf, and to make uſe of them when I ſtand more in need.

Well Sir, I am friends with you, only the charges that I am out of, I hope you will pay me. T. G.

As I have taken up the difference, let me alſo ſet down the charges, becauſe you do ſo lovingly receive me, if you will be pleaſed to pay the one halfe, I will be contented to pay the other: with which he being contented we both parted. Min.

All the time that I diſcourſed with him his colour was high, and all the blood of his body was in his face; as if my humble ſubmiſſion had wounded his deceitful and treacherous heart; and he could not deny me for the preſent any thing; ſuch a prevalency hath humility, which doth ſweetly inſinuate it ſelf into the hearts of the proud and haughty, and altereth their minds and reſolutions.

But God alone is immutable, and upon whoſe word we may ſafely and ſecurely ground and bottom our ſelves, as upon a certain and an unalterable baſis. As for man how mutable is he, and ſubject to a thouſand alterations? how ſuddenly are his thoughts changed into clean contrary reſolves? even as it is in the face of the heavens, it is not alwayes calme and ſerene, but ſometimes overcaſt and cloudy: ſo with the minds of men, which are ſometimes clear and free, but by and by covered with the miſts and fogs of malice and revenge. No ſooner was I parted from him, but his mind is changed, and his word which was paſt is vaniſhed in the air and a ſtrong gale of covetouſneſs and policy cauſed him to divert his courſe, and did drive him back from that agreement which he had made with me; and no peace might I have, but ſuch as I could buy of him; who was himſelfe gone to *London*, and yet was pleaſed by one *John Rawlin* for to ſend this meſſage, *That unleſs I would pay all his charges he would proceed.*

So dear unto me was my quiet and immunity from diſturbance, that I ſhould willingly have parted with any thing rather than it; which in the want of that affluency and abundance, worldlings ſweetned my life, and equalled it with theirs: did I know what his greedy deſires and covetouſneſs would demand of me? And ſuch was the poorneſs of my

 ability,

ability, that I was not able to give much, and therefore I ſent this anſwer, *That I hoped I had made an end already with him*; thinking that they would take that as ſatisfactory for the preſent, until ſuch time as we ſhould meet; when I doubted not but that we ſhould friendly and unanimouſly agree.

But his thoughts were not as mine; in ſtead of thoughts of compliance and friendſhip, he had thoughts of ſtrife and diſſention, as clearly ſeen by his actions; when as he had again renewen his Writ, and as himſelf declared, had unalterable reſolutions to proſecute againſt me.

All men are not made ours by one and the ſame way, ſome by ſubmiſſion and humility are ſweetly attracted and drawn in, others not without power and violence are buckled to agreement; and therefore I was adviſed by them, to whom I was dear, to ſend for a Writ for him, and to ſue him upon an Action of Defamation; which I did; not with any intentions to live like the Salamander, in fire and flames of diſcontents and diſturbance, but with thoughts of peace; thinking that thoſe who are not won by gentle intreaties, by force and might may be brought to compliance; but all is one, fair and foul means prevail alike with him. This alſo ſtirs him up to an hotter oppoſition, and makes him big with malice; which, like a full ſpring-tyde, overflows the banks of charity and love: So that then unadviſedly we both proſecuted, and none coming to the gap to make up the breach, we joined Iſſue, and brought both actions unto trial.

There is no practice ſo wicked, or work ſo ungodly, which malice and envy will not attempt to ſet upon, when men deſtitute of the fear of the Lord, ſuffer themſelves to be poſſeſſed with pride and hatred. There is nothing ſo unjuſt, but it will be acted; and all means, be they never ſo cruel and unwarrantable, but will be uſed to bring about their miſchievous deſigns: and then an opportunity being preſented unto him to do me miſchief, namely, a Committee impowred to eject Ignorant and Scandalous Miniſters, his malice incited and ſtirred him up to leave the Law; to which firſt he addreſſed himſelf, and went unto the Committe, and exhibited theſe Articles.

Articles

Articles exhibited againſt Mr. John Henſon, *requiring his appearance.* Norf.

I. *That Mr.* John Henſon *is guilty of Drunkenneſs.*

II. *That the ſaid Mr.* Henſon *is guilty of frequenting Ale Houſes.*

III. *That he is guilty of frequent playing at Cards and Dice.*

IV. *That he is guilty of profane Swearing.*

V. *That he is guilty of countenancing the profanation of the Sabbath in his pariſhioners and others.*

When as I made my appearance, in obedience to their ſummons, I found them ſo fully poſſeſſed of my guiltineſs of the crimes charged upon me, and ſo prejudicate, that nothing would induce them to believe the contrary: which all charity and heavenly love would have cauſed them for to judge otherwiſe, until further proof and evidence againſt me. An enemies information is not eaſily for to find entrance into any mans breaſt, nor ſuddenly to inſinuate it ſelf into credence and belief. Credit, life, and livelihood are ſiſters, go hand in hand, and the Laws are as careful for the preſervation of the one as the other; therefore they ſhould have been careful, leſt by prejudicacy and partiality, they might wrong the innocent: but they were ſo fully ſetled in the belief of the truth of the charge, as if they did intend to eject me without further hearing; all of them flinging durt on my face, and ſpeaking to my diſhonour and defamation. I did declare unto them the ground and original of the exhibition of the Articles, that it was a particular quarrel, that there was a ſuit depending at the Common Law for the ſame crimes that there I was charged withal. But all this availed nothing, ſtill they perſiſted in their prejudicacy; adding, that the very place I lived in was a cage of unclean birds.

Et quamvis vera ſunt, non tamen credenda ſunt, niſi certis indiciis comprobentur, niſi quæ manifeſto judicio convincuntur, niſi quæ judiciario ordine publicantur. Concil. Rom. lib. 3.

Non oportet accuſatores a judicibus audiri, ante quam diſcutiatur quæ intentione, qua conſcientia ſe pro Deo, aut eo die ipſe præſumpſerit.

So dear was I unto my pariſhioners, and ſo united was their affections unto me, that although *Norwich*, the place where the Committee did ſit, was thirty miles from them yet divers of them did deſire me that they might go with me, but it was in the depth of winter, in extremity of cold, ſo that

Melior cauſa Caſſii ſed denegare Bruto nihil poſſum.

that I would not ſuffer them: and although they did not go themſelves, yet they would truſt me with their credits; and therefore did unanimouſly agree in this following certificate.

Theſe are for to certifie unto all whom it may concern, that the Bearer hereof John Henſon, *Maſter of Arts, and Miniſter of the Word of God in* Terrington, *is a man Orthodox in his Judgement, Godly in his Life and Converſation, and painful in the exerciſe of his Miniſterial Function.*

Which I preſented unto them, deſiring them to read it, but they ſlightly peruſing it, laid it by, and gave more credit and belief unto the Informer than to them, whoſe words were of more ſtrength and validity than his Bond or Bill.

It was no ſmall grief and diſturbance to ſee my ſelf ſo perplexed, and could find no ſhelter or refuge. By this I underſtood that I ſhould find but little comfort from the Commiſſioners: and I well knew that my Adverſary had thoſe at his command that would condemn even innocency it ſelf, if it appeared.

Atheiſm and uncharitableneſs cannot poſſibly take ſuch deep root within the heart of a man, that all remorſe (in the proſecution of wickedneſs) can be quite excluded and ſhut out. Men do that in the precipitate and inconſiderate condition of anger and paſſion, which they repent of in cold blood: where there is any diſpoſition of ingenuity or loving favour, it will take fire after the malicious proſecution of a man undeſervedly, except it be in ſuch who are altogether rude, in whom there is no thoughts but of revenge and ſlaughter. And indeed thus it was with my Adverſary, although his reaſon was a little drowned in choler and diſturbance, although juſtice and civility was laid aſleep for the preſent, and his furious paſſion carried him violently on for to Article againſt me; yet at length reaſon began for to take her place, and juſtice and civility to awaken; ſo that he now offers conditions of peace and agreement, like a politick and cunning enemy, who having tired out a Town with a long continued leager and aſſault, offers articles of ſurrender hoping to have his own demands.

Peace I might have, but I muſt pay for it, either with the loſs

loss of *twenty pounds*, or else I must lose both *Credit* and *Benefice*; he having those at his command which would Swear me out of both.

A good Name is better then great riches; and indeed so it is and ought to be accounted of, as being that which for the present smells sweet, and renders us acceptable unto those with whom we are conversant, & which imbalmes us unto posterity when we are dead and departed, and consecrates us to a kind of immortality, to those that come after us: and in comparison of which, I looked upon my *Benefice* as the rather to be parted from, as being able to preserve me in it; or in case of a wrongful Ejectment to prefer me to a better: therefore it was thought the best means, rather for to part with *twenty pounds*, then to adventure my *Credit* and my *Benefice*, with those who made no conscience of an Oath; and whose very religion consisted in scandalizing the Clergy, and bringing them into discredit and contempt.

The Articles of Agreement.

First, *That there should be no further prosecution by* Thomas Gunnell *against* John Henson *of any Articles exhibited against him.*

Secondly, *That all Suits and Actions Commenced at the Law, either by the said* Thomas Gunnell *against the said* John Henson, *or of the said* John *against the said* Thomas, *be ceased and let fall.*

Thirdly, *That there should be general Acquittances reciprocally drawn betwixt both the said parties.*

Fourthly, *That the said* Thomas Gunnell *should not appear against the said* John Henson *at the Committee; but that the said* John Henson *should appear in obedience unto the Summons of the Commissioners.*

But what is the success of all this? I am for peace, but when I speak they are for war. My too humble condescention doth rather augment their policies, then procure me quietness. In such a condition and to such things are the Ministers of God at present laid open: my stooping to grant so much, is made an occasion by them to demand more; and to have the greater advantages of me, to further

their

their wicked intentions: So true it is, that we ſtand in need of Serpentine wiſedom when we deal with Wolves; they ſeem to me to be rather Monſters then Men, who have two tongues, and two hearts; who intend nothing leſs then they ſpeak, and will reſt in no determinations but their own crooked and perverſe ways and policy: ſuch men are not to be dealt with all; or, if upon neceſſity they muſt be, they muſt be well girt, or elſe expect a danger.

When I, out of that goodneſs of nature which God hath given me (if I may ſo ſay without any affection to my ſelf) did pleaſe to give him *twenty pounds*, the charges which he diſſembled to be out of at the Law; this ſhould have melted his heart into goodneſs and love, and not have miniſtred to him an occaſion of working to me any further trouble. But all paſſages of love and goodneſs on my part are received as the moſt nouriſhing and cordial meats into a body ill affected, which doth rather inflame the diſtemper, then any ways allay the heat and furiouſneſs of the diſeaſe: all acts of love, and ſeeking peace with him, do but rather ſtir up in him further intention of doing me miſchief: aſſoon as I had got to the Committee, to make my appearance, not onely according unto the Summons of the Commiſſioners, but the Articles of agreement, his man *Matthew Blackborn* was at my heels contrary to the agreement made betwixt us. I did not fear what he could ſay againſt me; for I was aſſuredly perſwaded, that neither he, nor any man in the world could ever prove, except it were by falſe witneſs, and before partial Judges, that I was guilty of thoſe Articles maliciouſly proſecuted, and moſt of them forged againſt me to my ruine; as I have already in the face of the County ſufficiently proved, and alſo ſhall further make known unto all the world, when God ſhall be pleaſed to raiſe me up to an ability to vindicate my ſelf.

God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie my ſelf to be clear from all infirmities, and from all the ſlips and failings which always have been, ſtill are, and ever ſhall remain until the perfection of all things ſhall come; and the perfect redemption of the ſons of God. We are men ſubject unto the ſame infirmities and paſſions as you are: we are not yet arrived at perfe-

perfection; but we preſs forward by degrees unto ſanctification: but for theſe things I make my appearance before the great Court of the King of Kings, and find pardon for them; And alſo, in obedience unto the Summons of the Commiſſioners, I made my appearance before them; and I did then and there declare, That if any one could accuſe me of the Crimes charged upon me, I was there to make my defence.

The ſaid *Matthew Blackborn* (who at the exhibition of the Articles did affirm unto ſome of the Commiſſioners that he would make Oath to all or moſt of them) (and who was, by the Procurement of his Maſter my Adverſary, to Swear that he had ſeen me *ſo Drunk that I could neither go nor ſtand*; as he himſelf confeſſed to me ſince,) did then, not onely deny the words, but alſo being Examined upon Interrogatories, quit and clear me of all the Crimes charged upon me.

They ſeemed to be a little moved, to ſee me ſtand before them accuſed, and none to accuſe or bear Witneſs againſt me; but they would not uſe me, as our compaſſionate Saviour did the Woman taken in the act and accuſed of Adultery ſeeing there was none for to give in evidence againſt her, diſmiſſed her; but, as if mildneſs had been quite exil'd from them, and onely ſeverity did find entertainment with them, they would force my Adverſary for to proſecute that, which he had exhibited; and therefore they did ſend down Warrants of contempt to fetch up him, and his Witneſſes to teſtifie their knowledge concerning the Articles.

Quær. *Whether they can force any man for to proſecute an Information given in unto them?*

O, what was the reaſon of this their action? did not they know that there was difference betwixt us? and will not our reconciliation pleaſe them without my ruin? in caſe I had been guilty, mildneſs and mercy would better have become them, then cruelty and ſeverity; laws being made more for to terrifie and keep in order, then utterly to ruin and to deſtroy men. Methinks they might have had ſome reſpect unto my *credit* and *reputation*, leſt through their occaſion evil might befall me; they might have had ſome regard unto the *tenderneſs* of my *age*, as experimentally knowing that it

Non eſt vitium crede mihi adoleſcenti.

is

is sometimes subject unto folly and vanity, and not, in the beginning of my age and fortunes, to blast them both as untimely fruit.

The life of my adversary did depend upon that favour and credit, which he had with the Commissioners; and therefore fearing that his non-prosecution should quite extinquish, or something diminish his Fame and Repute with them, in this *Dilemma* chuseth rather to doe me wrong, and to fall from the agreement made with me, then in the least to bring himself into disrespect with the Committee; who are able to make good whatsoever dammage he may possibly sustain by me, who in all likelyhood should not sit still, and see my self for to be so abused.

But God help me; this act of the Committee draws my Adversary afresh, to muster up all the Forces of wisedom and policy, to make three sons in law of one daughter the product of this unfortunate act of the Committee; that he might not onely keep up his credit with the Commissioners, which by his non-prosecution he was in danger for to lose; nor possesse himself of my monies which he wanted, and stood in need of for the prosecution of the matter; but also so accomplish his desires and wishes, that all the results of wisedom could not possibly bring forth a more desirable effect. The work may now be done, and he hath furnished me with money for to carry it on; I will carry as fair correspondence as I can; but I am resolved cunningly to prosecute that I may not onely wind my self out of this action, but also prove that which without good proof will certainly be a cause of future dammage that may probably befall me: and also I shall ingage the authority of the Court for to maintain that for to be sufficiently proved before them, which is depending at the Law.

All that I desired of the Committee then, was, that they would suspend their judgements untill such time as the trials were past; but they would not grant it, but did flatly deny me it; wherein would it have been any ways disadvantagious unto them for to have granted me six weeks time, *in judicando criminosa celeritas*, in small matters it is good to hasten judgement; but where life or livelihood depends, it is best to

proceed

proceed advisedly, and not without deliberation. *Deut.* 13. 14. *Thou shalt inquire, and make search, and ask diligently, and behold if it be truth.* Though the cry of the sins of *Sodom* had reached up to Heaven, yet God would not believe them until he went down to see whether it were true. You might have been pleased to have come down from *Norwich*, and inquired diligently whether the Information was true or not. I was well known unto them about me; and the manner of my life and conversation; I wonder at your rashness: were you afraid that you should not eject me soon enough, and before the Tythes were due? or that I should escape your hands without Ejectment? were you in Fee with the Informer? what was the reason you made so much haste? judges of criminal causes are not rapidly for to move with *Sol* but slowly with *Saturn*, lest they should do that in haste of which they should repent at leisure. Is it a small thing for to be intrusted with mens lives and fortunes, that it is made no matter how they are dealt with? do not our lives and fortunes depend upon you? with what judgement therefore and discretion are you for to deliberate on our actions; and not, but with wisedom and discretion, to go on in the prosecution? had it been any unlawful favour to have granted me this my desire? the Law doth afford unto the Laity six months, that they may be the better furnished with arguments, and fitted and prepared for their trials; are we unworthy or uncapable of the same liberty, that we must be out of hand executed? did I any ways indeavour to subvert the authority of your Court and Committee? or to have that call'd in, which he, whom God had pleased, by his secret providential dispensation, to call to be supreme, had ordained and made; no; all my desire was to have had a fair trial with my adversary, (which I had reason for to doubt of before you,) and in case he would have proved his Answer to my Declaration, I should willingly have submitted to the Determination of the Law.

But *fertur equis auriga, & currus nescit habenas*; they would not stay, nor defer their giving their judgements upon me; but Commissioners, Informers, and Witnesses, resolved to have a present Hearing and Determination of the matter;

and therefore Warrants were ſent down to fetch up the Witneſſes, in obedience unto whoſe Summons up they went; and what they Swore againſt me I never knew; but this enſuing Warrant was preſently ſent me.

Norf. By the Commiſſioners for ejecting of Ignorant and Scandalous Miniſters and Schoolmaſters ſitting at *Norwich* this 23. of *Jan.* 1654.

WHereas ſeveral Witneſſes were this day Examined upon Oath, concerning Articles exhibited againſt Mr. John Henſon, *Miniſter of* Terrington Clements, *in this County, and it is this day agreed by the ſaid Commiſſioners, that upon* Tueſday *the* 30. *day of this inſtant* Jan. 1654. *that the ſaid Proof is to be finiſhed: at which time, the ſaid Mr.* John Henſon *may be preſent, if he pleaſe, at the uſual place, being the Grand-jury Chamber; Whereunto we have ſet our hands.*

Henry King, Tho. Barrit, Tho. Garret, Ralph Woolner, and Roger Harper.

But I was ſo tired by frequent journeying from Poſt to Pillar, from Pillar to Poſt; from *Lyn* to *Norwich*, from *Norwich* to *Lyn*, and ſo diſabled through poverty and weakneſs, that I was forced to ſuffer my ſelf to be wounded by the Commiſſioners; yet hoping to find a Cure in Law.

Norf. By the Commiſſioners for ejecting of Ignorant and Scandalous *Miniſters* and *Schoolmaſters* ſitting at *Norwich*, *Feb.* 13. 1654.

WHereas it hath appeared unto us by examination of witneſſes upon Oath, that Mr. John Henſon *Miniſter of* Terrington Clements *is guilty of the Articles exhibited againſt him, viz. of Drunkenneſs and common haunting of Ale-Houſes; and the ſaid Mr.* John Henſon *having been duely ſummoned, and the ſaid Articles proved by competent witneſſes: upon due and ſerious conſideration had of the whole matter, according unto the power given unto us by an Ordinance of his Highneſs the Lord Protector and his Council, dated the* 29th. *day*

The Act it ſelf ſaith credible Witneſſes.

day of Auguſt, 1654. *We do adjudge the ſaid Mr.* John Henſon *guilty of both the aforeſaid crimes, and worthy to be ejected and diſplaced from officiating in the ſaid Pariſh Church; and do hereby eject and diſplace the ſaid Mr.* John Henſon *Miniſter of the Town aforeſaid from his ſaid Church, Cure, and Benefice, and from all ſuch other Cures, Benefices, Places and Churches, whereof the ſaid Mr.* John Henſon *is now poſſeſſed, and require Mr.* John Richars, *Mr.* John Rawlin, *and* Thomas Gunnel *Gent. of the Town aforeſaid, to ſequeſter all the Houſes and Glebe-land belonging to the ſaid Pariſh Church, and to receive and gather all the profits thereunto belonging, and to provide ſuch able and honeſt perſons to preach the word of God to the people of the aforeſaid Pariſh, as ſhall be approved of by the Commiſſioners appointed in the forementioned Ordinance, until further order. Given under our hands and ſeals the day and year above written.* Nicholas Salter, Tho. Barrit, John Toft, Ralph Woolmer, Henry King.

The Informer was made Sequeſtrator.

How deplorable is my condition? how have I been uſed? I have not been thought worthy of being partaker of that freedom and liberty unto which I was born. I have been deprived of my birthright. See the Declarations of this Parliament, *Decemb.* 15. and *Jan.* 17. 1641. the benefits of the Law, and the ordinary courſe of juſtice are the Subjects birthright. What is my fault? what have I done? wherein have I offended? have I taken up arms againſt the Supreme Magiſtrate? or have I ſecretly endeavoured to hurt his perſon? or have I blaſted his reputation? No, I have not, and I will not, I have learned to be obedient: Yet I have not been legally proſecuted, but cruelly perſecuted, and privately as it were, murdered. *That no freeman ſhall be taken, or impriſoned, or diſſeized of his free hold, or liberties, or free cuſtoms, or be out-law'd, or exiled, or any other ways deſtroyed; nor we ſhall not paſs upon him, but by a lawful judgement of his Peers, or by the Law of the land.* By the Declaration of *April* 17. 1646. promiſe was made not to interrupt the courſe of Juſtice in the ordinary Courts. I have been diſſeized, deprived of my living, my free hold, I have been out-law'd and deſtroyed, I have had an unlawful judgement paſt upon me. And I know

not whether Commiſſioners, Informer, or Witneſſes have done me moſt wrong. I appeal unto all the good and faithful people of the Nation, whether it be a righteous judgement. Who was ever yet condemned unheard? It was a judgement of a Doctor of the Iews upon their Law, that it condemned none without hearing. Doth our Law condemn any man before it hear him, and know what he doth? and it was the Law of the Romans. It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accuſed hath the accuſer face to face, and have licence to anſwer for himſelf concerning the crime laid againſt him. I have not been heard, I have not had the accuſer face to face; yet I have been judged, yet I have been condemned. Who was ever condemned by ſuch evidence, by ſuch witneſſes, by ſuch information?

Stanfords Pleas of the Crown. *fol.* 163, 164. Stat. 1, & 2. Stat. 25. *Edw.* 3. *cap.* 2.

A charge is not to be taken from every one, eſpecially againſt a Miniſter; if every information ſhould be received, the Commiſſioners might have work enough, and there would be a Catholick and ſucceſſive ejectment: but it is to be received from credible perſons: ſuch an heavy puniſhment as ſequeſtration, incapacitating and perpetual deſtruction ought not to be inflicted but by punctual proof of credible witneſſes; *Accuſatio fieri non debet niſi ab idoneis, & probatiſſimis viris*, from fit men, of goodneſs, and they are to be men religious and honeſt, who have a good report with all men, *quærendum in judicio, cujus ſit converſationis is qui accuſat.; & is qui accuſatur*, and *is qui ſceleribus eſt iretitus, non habet vocem accuſandi*; But my Adverſary was an unfit perſon.

The Commiſſioners did not only know him to be a Lyar, who had related many an untruth to them before; but they were altogether ignorant of me, having never ſeen me nor enquired after me, yet they privately condemn'd and depriv'd me of my eſtate.

It had been the duty of ſuch to have made enquiry into the true cauſe of the information, whether for the glory of God, through malice, or for the ſatisfying of his revenge.

It was an enemy that did this, between whom and I, there was a ſuit depending at the Law, for the ſame things that I was

was call'd in queſtion: and no man ought for to be Plaintiff and Witneſs, as our Law hath provided. How can it be expected that he ſhould ſpeak truth, when as he is byaſſed with malice, and is in danger of ſuffering damage if he doth not get the matter in hand ſufficiently proved.

Was he a righteous man, ſo mightily ſwayed, and over powred with the holy ſpirit of truth, that he could not erre, a man might be ſuffered to be a witneſs in his own cauſe; yet the Law hath denied a Wife to be a witneſs for her Husband; but what is nearer to any man than himſelf? and what more common and prevalent with a man than ſelfe-love? which doth induce and draw men many times to avouch that to be true which is a lye.

Secondly, whether a juſt upright man, and one that feareth God, eſcheweth evil, of an honeſt and good report? But he was a wicked man; Was not he a wicked man to proffer one ten ſhillings to ſwear unto that which his conſcience told him was an untruth?

Is not he a wicked man to tamper and engage one *Richard More*, to ſwear that he had ſeen me ſo Drunk, that I was not able to get out of the Cart way, as he himſelf hath confeſſed, not only unto me, but unto many more? which I my ſelf did ſee given in to the Committee.

Is not he a wicked man to procure one *Matthew Blackborn*, to make Oath, that he had ſeen me ſo Drunk, that I was neither able to go nor ſtand? Was ever any innocent perſon caſt away by ſuch a Court proceedings, by ſuch evidence, by ſuch Witneſſes? *Teſtes igitur ſint mites, iræ expertes; boni, charitate præditi, temperantes, continentes, fideles, pii; nam talium hominum propter mores, firmum, & proper vitam, verum cenſendum teſtimonium: qui tales non ſunt, nalite probare teſtimonium.* Witneſſes ought to be meek, void of hatred unto the perſon againſt whom they give evidence; truly godly, for ſuch evidence; for their manners may well be thought true, and for their converſation, right, *Ne mulier teſtis ſit, nec mancipium, nullus ſervus, nu, & ſuſpectaque perſona*; a Maid, nor a ſervant, are not to be thought credible Witneſſes, becauſe in the one, levity, in the other, unfaithfulneſs may well be ſuſpected.

But

But ſuch were thoſe that gave in evidence againſt me, a maid, one *Katharine Dodds*; and a young man, one *John* wo ſervants. *Vintner*; both the houſhold ſervants of my adverſary: and ſuch kind of people, that neither I, nor any man, that knoweth them, will ſcarcely believe them when they ſpeak truth; except they know it to be ſo: whoſe credit may be impeached, not only by their converſations, but their own confeſſions unto thoſe with whom they are intimate and familiar.

heir Con- *John Vintner* who hath been as falſe unto his Maſter my rſations. Adverſary, and Mr. *Philip Read*, as he hath been unto me; from whom he did ſteal a coat to the value of three pounds, a doublet, waſtcoat, belt and rapier, to the value of fifty ſhillings, beſides fifteen ſheep; yet his Maſter would not proſecute againſt him, but received him again into his ſervice, upon the condition that he would ſwear againſt me.

The Information of *Sara* and *John Hill* taken before *Joſhua Green*, Eſq. one of the Juſtices of peace for the County of *Norfolk*.

nfeſſions. *That* John Vintner, *upon the* 29. *of* September, 1654. *did ſay, that his Maſter*, Mr. Gunnel, *was a rogue, and a knave; and he would keep none in his houſe, but ſuch as would ſwear for him, and he would have me to ſwear, that I have ſeen* Mr. Henſon *Drunk; but I cannot for my hand: and he would leave his ſervice; for except he would forſwear himſelf, there was no abiding there.*

The Confeſſion of *John Vintner* to *Andrew Richers*.

That his Maſter had laid about him, what he could, to have him to ſwear that he had ſeen Mr. John Henſon *Drunk, but he could not for his hand.*

e Maid. *Katharin Dodds*, in whom impudency, levity, and perjury, do ſtrive which ſhould ſhow themſelves moſt; whoſe levity one *William Copher* knoweth as well as her Maſter; with whom I my ſelf did ſee her ſo familiar, that ſhe took him by the ſhoulders, and thruſt him into an Inne, and whoſe impudency and perjury was ſufficiently ſhown, and manifeſted in the face of the County.

bes. But they teſtifie beſt, *quibus nullum eſt mendacii præmium*; *itus.* what will not money, gifts, and promiſes of future rewards,

and

and making of in his ſervice, draw and tempt ſuch a poor ſimple girle to ſwear unto? ſhe had ſeven ſhillings and ſix pence, good cheer, and entertainment, a ſilk waſtcoat, and ſome linnen; and he would have given her gloves, but ſhe would not have them.

The Evidence of *Anne Adams* concerning the confeſſion of *Katharin Dodds* unto her, given at the Aſſiſes, held at *Thetford*, for the County of *Norfolk*. Confeſſion.

That ſhe was forced to doe as ſhe did, Rogue and Queen paſſed betwixt her and her Maſter, before he could get her to ſwear; that ſhe did not know what ſhe did, that what they had written, ſhe did ſay it was true; but ſhe knew not what it was; that ſhe ſaw her Maſter ſwear, James Preſton *ſwear, and* John Vintner *ſwear, and ſo ſhe did ſwear.*

Indeed ſhee is a common Swearer; who ſcarcely nameth any thing ſo frequently as her Maker; and the wounds and bloud of her Redeemer to avouch the greateſt untruth.

The Confeſſion of *Katharin Dodds* to divers.

That if her Maſter ſhould give her his whole eſtate, he could not make her ſatisfaction, ſwearing as ſhe had done for him.

James Preſton his Confeſſion unto *Simon Pelham*.

That he never did ſee Mr. Henſon *ſtrike Mr.* Gunnell; *and yet for all this, he ſwore it in the face of the County.* This was the Informer, theſe were the Witneſſes in my Ejectment. His confeſſion.

The Information and Affidavit of *Matthew Blackborne* ſervant to the ſaid *Thomas Gunnell*.

That the ſaid Thomas Gunnell *did urge me* Matthew Blackborn *to ſwear unto the Articles which he the ſaid* Gunnell *had exhibited; alſo his wife and his wives mother Mrs.* Rachel Pulton *did further urge me to ſwear to the ſaid Articles, and ſaid that the next Miniſter ſhould give me Five pounds, and that they the ſaid* Thomas Gunnell *and Mrs.* Gunnell, *and* Mrs. Rachel Pulton *would warrant it. And further* Gunnell *did ſay, that if* James Preſton *would not ſwear home, the Divel take him.*

And as for John Vintner *I will make him ſwear, or elſe I will*

will make him rue it for all his roguery; for I could hang him.

And as for Katharin Dodds *I must get her away from* Platers *and I shall doe well enough.*

Also he did say, that if Mr. East *would not give him sixty pounds for the living of* Terrington *he should not have it; for he could put in whom he pleased.*

But although I had little hopes of receiving either justice or mercy from the Commissioners, yet I doubted not of fair proceedings at Law; and therefore being forced unto it by my Adversary, did at last cast my self upon a Trial, at the Assizes holden for the County of *Norfolk* at *Thetford*, the twentieth of *March*, 1654. where after sufficient Proof by the Oaths of *William Wait*, Gent. *William Snell*, *William Barnewell*, and others, men of approved honesty and integrity; and by the testimony under Certificate of *Richard Prat*, Gent. *John Bird*, Gent. *Richard Trice*, Gentt *John Barrit*, Gent. *John Plater*, Gent. *Roger Haineſworth*, Gent. and many more Gentlemen of known worth and repute in their Country; such satisfaction was given unto the Judge & Juries there, that in the Action of Battery wherein my Adversary was Plaintiff and I Defendant, was given twenty shillings cost, and in the Action wherein I was Plaintiff and he Defendant fourscore pounds damages and twenty shillings cost; as by the Judgement on Record of the said Assizes more fully appeareth.

Whereupon my most dear parishioners and loving neighbours knowing mine innocency in those things whereof I was accused, and seeing that I had acquitted my self of those Crimes which were laid to my charge, being willing still to continue me their Minister, and grieved for my wrong; they mutually agreed together on my behalf in this following Petition.

To

To the Honourable the Commiſſioners for the ejecting of Ignorant and Scandalous Miniſters and Schoolmaſters ſitting at the Grand jury Chamber in *Norwich*.

The humble Petition of the Inhabitants of Terrington *for and in the behalf of Mr.* John Henſon *Clerk their Vicar.*

Sheweth,

THat by a former Certificate ſubſcribed by us, *We did teſtifie unto all whom it might concern, That the ſaid Mr.* Henſon *was of a good Life and Converſation, and a pious and painful Preacher of God's word and Truth amongſt us; which certificate we underſtand was preſented unto ſome of you and read: Neverthleſs by the Information of one* Thomas Gunnell, *but lately come into our Town, and by the teſtimony of two or three perſons of inferiour quality, it hath been certified unto you, that the ſaid Mr.* Henſon *is guilty of certain Articles exhibited againſt him; upon which Information you have been pleaſed to proceed to the Ejectment of the ſaid Mr.* Henſon, *unto which your Order he hath peaceably and quietly ſubmitted; yet foraſmuch as we know that the ground and original of the ſaid Information was a particular difference and quarrel ariſing between the ſaid Mr.* Henſon *and the ſaid* Thomas Gunnell *about a Seat in the Church; upon which quarrel, there ſucceeded two ſeveral Actions, the one for Battery, the other for Scandalous words, depending at the Common Law, before the ſaid Information was exhibited unto you: And foraſmuch as the ſaid Mr.* Henſon *hath at the laſt Aſſizes, held for this County of* Norfolk *at* Thetford, *by the Teſtimony of many ſubſtantial and honeſt men, given ſuch ſatisfaction to the Judge and Jurors there, that the ſaid Mr.* Henſon *did obtain two ſeveral Verdicts againſt the ſaid* Thomas Gunnell; *and did alſo quit the ſaid Mr.* Henſon *of all the ſaid Crimes charged upon him; and*

hath alſo by the ſaid Teſtimonies made it apparent, that the ſaid Witneſſes produced by the ſaid Thomas *againſt the ſaid Mr.* Henſon, *being the ſame perſons that were formerly produced before you, are perſons not only of a low and mean quality, and two of them ſervants to the ſaid* Thomas Gunnell, *but alſo that they have falſly born witneſſe againſt him, whereby it's apparent, that the Information is not only falſe but infamous, and maliciouſly proſecuted againſt him to his ruin, and for the advantage of the ſaid* Thomas Gunnell *in the proſecution of his ſaid Action: We therefore do Humbly pray, that taking theſe things into your due and ſerious Conſideration, you will be pleaſed as your piety and wiſedom ſhall direct you to revoke your former Order of Ejectment, and to Reſtore the ſaid Mr.* Henſon *our Miniſter unto us, as being Innocent and not at all guilty of thoſe Articles maliciouſly exhibited againſt him, And your Petitioners ſhall pray, &c.*

Rich. Prat, Gent.	William Allin.
Nicholas Gradin.	Edm. Richers.
William Ludlam.	Tho. Farthing, *ſen.*
John Nobbs.	Tho. Farthing, *jun.*
William Worſhip.	Simon Pellam.
Andrew Richers.	John Farthing.
Robert Cooke.	Thomas Meaſe.
Henry Wright.	John Parker.
&c.	*&c.*

When *Gunnell* perceived that he could not bring about his purpoſes by fair means, he was reſolved to uſe foule, and when he did ſee that he could not bend juſtice, he endeavoured to delude and blind Authority; and therefore by a Petition, he laboured to poſſeſſe the Lord Protector and his Council, that what I did was onely in oppoſition to the preſent Government, when as it was meerly (God knoweth and all intelligent men may plainly underſtand) for the preſervation of my ſelf (which by the Laws of God and nature every man is bound to doe) that by that means he might quit himſelf of the payment of that Dammage which was given me by the Law for that wrong he had done unto me: and

ſo,

ſo by the help of Mr. *Lockier* a kinſman to his wife, whom (I am confident) he did delude, (as afterwards the Protector and his Council) obtained this Order for a Reference.

Wedneſday the 17. 1655. The month was not expreſſed.

At the Council at *Whitehall.*

THe Council being this day Informed that John Henſon *late Miniſter of* Terrington *St.* Clement *in* Marſhland *in the County of* Norfolk, *being upon Articles of Scandal, Ejected out of the ſaid Living by the Commiſſioners for Ejecting of Ignorant, Scandalous, and Inſufficient Miniſters and Schoolmaſters for the County of* Norfolk *at the proſecution of* Thomas Gunnell, *the ſaid* Henſon *hath brought againſt the ſaid* Thomas Gunnell *an Action of the Caſe for words referring to the ſaid Articles, and hath obtained thereupon at the Aſſizes, held at* Thetford *the twentieth of* March, 1654. *a Verdict; whereupon Judgement is entred of Eighty pounds Damages and Coſt: Ordered by his Highneſſe the Lord Protector and his Councill, that it be, and is hereby referred, to the preſent Maior of* Lyn, *and to Major* Style, *to ſend for the ſaid parties, and ſuch witneſſes and papers, as they ſhall find neceſſary for their ſatisfaction concerning the truth of the premiſes; and thereupon to examine and ſtate the whole Fact, and to make return thereof to the Council with the firſt opportunity.*

Jeſſop *Cler. Conc.*

O untrue information! O false and infamous person! what? wilt thou not only deceive and abuse me, but also the supreme Magistrate himself too? unto whom we are to speak as truly as to God himself, whose person and majesty he represents; did I bring the Action against thee because I was Ejected through thy prosecution? or was the Ejectment procured privately and hastily in revenge unto the said Action? that thou mightest bear me down by the authority and power of the Committee (whose might and will, such a poor shrub as I was neither able to resist, nor withstand, but must necessarily fall before them) was the suit commenced for words referring to the Articles; no it was not; but the Articles were exhibited sinisterly, and because thou durst not stand unto a fair triall at Law. What the truth of his Information was, and whether or no this man be a fit person to make an informer of, and to confirm the truth of this whole Narration, that all equal and religious people may judge betwixt us; I have thought good to set down the Result of the Reference, which was as followeth.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE Councill of State.

IN obedience to the order hereunto annexed, We have examined, and do ſtate the whole matter of Fact between *Thomas Gunnel* and *John Henſon* late Miniſter of *Terrington* St. *Clements* in the County of *Norfolk*, as followeth.

Firſt, we do find that in *Trinity* term, 1654. the ſaid *John Henſon had an action* upon the caſe before that time, *viz.* in *Hillary* term, 1653. brought againſt the ſaid *Thomas Gunnell* for theſe Engliſh words, *viz.* You (meaning the ſaid Mr. *Henſon*) are a drunken Prieſt; which ſaid action was in the ſaid *Trinity* term, 1654. made fit for Trial, and brought down into the County of *Norfolk*, to be tried at the Aſſizes there, to be holden the firſt day of *Auguſt*, 1654. and it is confeſſed by the ſaid Mr. *Henſon*, that the 20 of *March*, 1654. he obtained a Verdict, and Judgement afterwards, as in the Order of the Council is mentioned.

Secondly, We do find that by an Ordinance for ejecting of ſcandalous, ignorant, and inſufficient Miniſters, and Schoolmaſters, dated the 29 day of *Auguſt*, 1654. the ſaid *John Henſon* was adjudged guilty of Drunkenneſs and common haunting of Alehouſes, by five of the Commiſſioners of the ſaid County of *Norfolk*, named in that Ordinance, that is to ſay, *Thomas Barrit*, *Henry King*, *Ralph Woolmer*, *Nicholas Salter*, *John Toft*, as by their Order dated the 14 day of *February*, 1654. under their Hands and Seals appeareth.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, We do alſo find, that ſoon after the ſaid *John Henſon* was ejected, there was a Petition directed to the Honourable the Committee for ejecting of ignorant, and ſcandalous Miniſters and Schoolmaſters, ſitting at the Grand jury chamber in *Norwich*, from 26 of the Inhabitants of *Terrington*, divers of which were here this day, and affirmed the ſame to be true: Wherein they Petitioned that the ſaid Mr. *Henſon* their Miniſter, being a man of good life and converſation, and a pious, and painful Preacher of God's word, might be reſtored again to his Living: he being from thence ejected by reaſon of certain Articles exhibited againſt him by one *Thomas Gunnell* (now come to their town) for that the crimes charged upon the ſaid Mr. *Henſon* were acquitted by the Jury and Jurors at the Aſſizes; and that the witneſſes produced by the ſaid *Thomas Gunnell* againſt the ſaid Mr. *Henſon*, (being the ſame perſons that were formerly produced againſt the ſaid Mr. *Henſon* at his ejectment) were not onely perſon of Low and Mean quality and Two of them ſervants to the ſaid Mr. *Gunnell*, but alſo that they had falſly born Witneſs againſt him, and that the Informations were not onely falſe, but infamous, and malicioufly proſecuted againſt him for the advantage of the ſaid *Thomas Gunnell*.

We do further find by the Information of *Richard Prat*, Gent. of *Terrington*, That he knowing that the difference did ariſe about a Seat in the Church of *Terrington* aforeſaid; whereupon two ſeveral Actions were brought the one againſt the other for ſcandalous words and battery, (and not upon any Articles exhibited) he the ſaid *Richard Prat* did mediate for peace between them; and becauſe it did appear to the ſaid Mr. *Prat*, that the ſaid *Thomas Gunnell* had ſpent in proſecuting, and defending, the ſaid Actions about 30 *l.* therefore the ſaid Mr. *Prat* did award, that the ſaid Mr. *Henſon* ſhould pay Mr. *Gunnell* Twenty pounds: Ten pounds down, and Ten pounds ſoon after; And that all Actions and all other Proceedings before the Committee (which were not then ſworn unto) ſhould ceaſe, and that they ſhould give one to the other general Acquittances.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, We do find by the information of *Mrs. Rachel Fulton*, that Mr. *Henſon* did come to her houſe about *February*, 1654. and asked for her Son *Gunnell* then from home, and ſaid, he came to Demand of him the Ten pounds he had paid unto him; and that ſhe then told him that her Son ſhe knew would be ſo far from Returning that, that he expected Ten pounds more according to the Agreement; and that Mr. *Henſon* then Anſwered, that if he had taken him off from the Committee at *Norwich*, he would have paied the other Ten pounds, and ſo general Acquittances ſhould have been given on both ſides according to the Agreement: and that Mr. *Henſon* further ſaid, that he would yet ſtand to the ſaid agreement if her Son would free him from the Committee; but if not, he would proceed at Law againſt her ſon, and bid her tell him ſo; and further Mr. *Henſon* ſaid, that the Committee had done more then they could juſtifie.

Sixthly, We have ſeen divers Certificates from the ſeveral neighbouring Towns under the hands of ſeveral Miniſters and others, which do Teſtifie the ſaid Mr. *Henſon* to be a man Orthodox in judgement, godly and pious in his life and converſation, and diligent in the Exercife of his Miniſterial function; and that he behaved himſelf meekly, peaceably, and godly; and that He lived without Offence or Scandal amongſt them.

Tho. Toll, Eſq. Maior of *Lynne*.

Joſhua Green, Eſq.

Jonah Scory, Eſq.

Capt. *John Styles*.

And

And to Conclude, notwithstanding by fair Trial I had obtained Verdict, and not without great difficulty Judgement, yet still I am not onely injuriously kept out of my *Benefice*, but also of that Damage which was given me by Law; my Adversary having since listed himself under the Command of the Army, in the Troop of Capt. *Sabbarton*, who doth not onely defend him from all execution of the Law upon him; but hath also threatned in case of prosecution further mischief not onely unto me but my Attorney.

To the supreme Authority the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England.

IN all humility and most submissive obedience I presume to produce this to your View; who am I but the least of the Tribe of *Levi*, and one of the unworthiest of the order of *Minims* within this Nation? and therefore it may well be thought by some (whose aims are private interest not publique good) a matter of small importance to let Me and my Case lie neglected without redresse: but Remember I beseech you, that *There ought to be no complaining in your streets*; and that *the groans of the oppressed will ascend and pierce the clouds, and come into the presence of God for a righteous sentence.*

The truth of this narrative being Apparrent, may it please the Authority out of a tender regard to Religion and godliness to vindicate me my lawful Claim to Justice, and I shall [illegible] to our Lord for grace and glory for you (to whom no excellent things cannot be wished) by

Your most obedient Servant and Subject,

John Henson.

FINIS.